

An Oral History of Sacramento's Economy

Oral History Interview

with

Mr. Jack Hyde

Owner of Jack's House of Music

December 9 & 10, 1997

By Rebecca L. Wendt
California State University, Sacramento

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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

MISSION STATEMENT

A group of graduate students are creating a project to record the memories of persons contributing to Sacramento's diverse economic history. The graduate students are enrolled in History 282C, an oral history seminar, administered by the History Department at California State University, Sacramento. This seminar is part of the required curriculum for the Masters of Arts degree in Public History. The goal of this 1997 fall semester project is to complete 10-15 transcribed oral history interviews. These interviews will represent various aspects of the Sacramento economy.

Once the interviews have been recorded, they will be transcribed and donated to the Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center (SAMCC). Researchers interested in Sacramento's economy will have access to the interview transcriptions at the archives. This seminar/project is being produced under the direction of Dr. Christopher Castaneda, Director of Oral History at California State University, Sacramento.

We welcome your participation in this project. Please feel free to contact Dr. Castaneda by phone (278-5631), or correspondence, if you have any questions about this project.

INTERVIEW HISTORY

Interviewer/Editor:

Rebecca L. Wendt
Graduate Student, CSUS, Department of Public
History
B.A. University of California, Davis (Anthropology,
emphasis in archaeology)

Interview Time and Place:

December 9 & 10, 1997: Mr. Hyde's office at his
business in Sacramento, California. Sessions of an
hour and a half.

Editing:

Ms. Wendt checked the verbatim transcript of the
interview against the original recording. The
transcript was edited for punctuation and the
elimination of false starts and repetitive "filler"
words. Editorial insertions are bracketed.

Tape and Interview Records:

The original recording of the interview is located at
the Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center
(SAMCC) .

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

Mr. Jack Hyde was born February 5, 1916 in Geneseo, Kansas. His parents, Hyrum L. Hyde and Emma E. Coulter Hyde, named him Ezra Norton Hyde. During his first year the nickname, "Jack," became his name for most intents and purposes.

He attended Kansas State Agricultural College from 1934-1936 and studied both business and music. Then, he moved to Indiana to be involved in the music business--the sort of business that he would be involved in from then on.

In 1940 he married his first wife, Betty Lucile Hyde (who is the only wife mentioned in this oral history narrative) with whom he had one son, Larry L. Hyde. She helped him in his business endeavors until her death in 1976. Then, in 1982, he married Mae Moyer who passed away in 1989.

In 1955 Mr. Hyde opened his current business, Jack's House of Music. It has expanded from its original size, but the location has remained the same. Now, however, he has extended his business to include a satellite store in Roseville.

[Bein Tape 1, Side A]

RW: This is Rebecca Wendt. It is Tuesday, December 9, 1997. I'm here in Sacramento, California at Jack's House of Music. I'm interviewing Mr. Jack Hyde, the owner, in his office. His store and office are located at 2528 Yorktown Avenue.

Mr. Hyde, I wanted to thank you for participating in our oral history project. If you'd like to get started? We'll discuss some of your life as it relates to your business. You've been here in Sacramento for quite a while. We'll discuss how you got started in the business and some of your other interests. I know you're very involved in the music community and the school music programs....

JH: All the schools as many as we can, you know, that are in need. And then we serve the outlying sections pretty well in the county. We handle several varieties like sheet music and band instruments--a very large inventory. That makes a

difference too. And that's pretty much it in a nutshell. My life. In between there was a lot of activity but after we got out here and since then I have lost my wife and.... But while when we were getting started we just worked together, and worked together, and had a good life because we enjoyed it so much. Because we, when we were in San Diego, we had many friends here and when we came out here they all came to our rescue until we got kind of dug in, you know, so to speak. And then we had many friends up here so that it worked and has gone to be a good thing. And I still enjoy it very much to this day. Very much. Stay active and I still play with some groups sometimes. Concert bands and that type of thing. And outside of that I have--our home is in Sacramento here and has been all along. And we haven't ventured into anything new other than the business. And I put in a new satellite store, as they call them, over in Roseville just four years ago. And so that gave me that much more to be involved in but it was a pleasureful thing.

RW: You're very busy. Let's go back to...when you...what was the city you were born in in Kansas again?

JH: Geneseo. G-E-N-E-S-E-O.

RW: Okay. What is one of your earliest memories from there?

JH: Oh it was the fact that when I was a kid...you see it was just a small school, I mean, and I was of course very active in about everything. And it was a high school too. Then at first they didn't have any band at all but they did have choral. And I was very active in all the arts I mean in everything from plays to singing. And then during that intro...

[A phone call interrupts Mr. Hyde, causing the taping session to cut short after a few more minutes.]

From that period which I enjoyed--there was very little to do in small towns you know. But my aunt who had moved back home from Kansas City and was the conservatory, I guess you'd say, operator. That was just before the real...if I can find the word I will...just bad times, hard times, you know. And I was just about fifteen and she took five of us and put together a little dance band. And we went all over the county and played, you know. And we got to the point where we were called to be into some of the smaller cities to play. That was one thing that I delighted in because it was just something going from a small town up a little, you know. And later on, why, I went to another town and played with another band. This was all after I did go back to college. That tail end of it. The first that I'm describing I was still in high school when we played so it was quite an experience. Good times you know in that respect. Sure I've had hard times too. I've had good times in that respect. Sure I've had hard times too. But I've enjoyed what I've done. I feel

like I have built, you know, if you will. I didn't have any partners or anything. My wife and I had come out, bless her heart. She was just right in with me. And we had such a good time. And then we have one son who's not a little boy anymore. But he's here. He's handicapped to a degree. So of course that keeps him in school. But we have a good life together. But we miss our mom. But about the other things, the little reminiscing of things that I could talk to you and tell you and I'd love to do. But I do have to be excused for this right today. This is kind of a catastrophe and very important. But I'll get with you any time. And you can finish. 'Cause I love to talk about it. I don't have many times when I get the opportunity to talk about my life. 'Cause I was an only child, see. Oh, I have wonderful relatives, you know. I often think of the time that we just, well we all lived back there just a short distance apart. And things were just well. Of course we had our ups and downs that everybody does. But I would, as I say, if you can do it I'll be available to you.

[December 10]

RW: Well, yesterday we were talking about your first experiences in high school when your aunt put together a group. And then, how about we talk about your college. Were you involved in music in college?

JH: Yes I was. I started out in music and then I went into a BA. I went into some courses, to get some courses, in, I guess you'd say, in selling. And then during that time I also played in a band. Played in the college band. And I also played in a dance band which we went all over in that part of Kansas. But it was the time that I was there--it was two years--I sure enjoyed it very much and I participated in what I wanted to get in the way of experience. Was to carry on. Then, by the same token I got into a bachelor's degree in business and that took another two years away from me and then when I got out of that, I didn't go back to school. Why then I started out selling as well as playing. And that took me clear up to...well, as I say, I played in a band and we toured all over. Well, it's funny now...but you get panicked, you know. But the agency that was booking us went ahead of us a day and he was collecting the money. And when we got way down in the wilds of Texas why there wasn't. We were to play but the manager said that we've already paid you, your agency. So we had to all hike clear back to Kansas. And that was an experience. When I in honesty had quite an experience. But I was hitchhiking and all I had was my suitcase and I'd hocked my horn. So I rode along and I got to thinking well this is a--as you will when you're out in the wilds I was just beside the road--and you don't know when you're going to be picked up. And I got to thinking well this is not for me at least at this stage. What can I do to have the best of two worlds? My music in a closer

situation. And, not teaching particularly but be in the business of either selling music or working in a factory, whatever. So, I hitchhiked back on home, back to Kansas. Then I learned that my mother's sister was back in Indiana and she lived in South Bend, Indiana which was not too far from Elkhart, Indiana which was supposed to be, at that time, the largest music manufacturing facility and all of the different jobs, of course, involved in it. In Elkhart, Indiana. And so I went over there and, in fact, I put in my application. And for I new one I didn't get very far. So I went back to South Bend. And another interesting thing happened to me. I was working selling shoes. A very nice shoe company, by the way. Then one morning I was there alone and a man come in and he said--and introduced himself as a manager of one of the Conn stores. That was when they had their own stores as well as the facility. He said that he wanted to see me and I said well just as soon as I get the place cleared out why then we'll talk. And he did and there was a store, there was a men's on one side and the chairs and women's on the other so he sat (I was fitting some woman) and he was on the other side. He was setting there and I didn't think anything about it. When I got through, got the store cleaned out, why I went back over intending to set down and talk to him. And he said, "Well you ran that well. How would you like to get in the music business?" And I was just taken with it. I didn't know. I said well Mr. Allen I've been trying to get just an interview to see if I could. I

said why yes I'd be very interested. And I said I've been trying to for some time. And he said I'll take care of it. You'll have a trial very soon. And he said, "By the way I was only coming over here to see if I couldn't sell you a new horn." I said, "Well, I think you can do that regardless." So, anyway, he went back and two days later they called and they said that his boss, who was the VP of the factory, said (his secretary said) that Mr. Sands would like to have an interview. And I said "Sure, when? and I'll come over." And I did. He had me come over after hours. I never forgot that. It was a big building, two-story building. There was just one light there in the hallway as you entered. And I went in there and there was no receptionist or anything at that time so I just sat around and pretty soon he come out--a few minutes--it seemed longer, but just a few minutes. He said I'd like to have you come in my office and we can talk about it. We had, it was a very interesting position, the time that he would give me. But I just told him what I'd been doing and everything about it. And he said well, I think, but I can't tell you right today, but I think we'd be interested in you. And he said that would be all right for right now, see. So I went on back home, back to South Bend where I was living with my wife's [mother's] sister, my aunt. And she said, "What are you trying to do here?" And I said I think I'll get a job over in Elkhart. So the next day they called and I went over and they said "Yes, we'd like to hire you and I'd like to know how soon you can start."

Apparently, the other fellow whose job I took was leaving so it worked out. So I went to their school. They had a training school that taught us what to do. I took that, and then the next thing they took me out in the parking lot and said, "Now, of course, we furnish you a car but you have to take care of it. And then you can drive where you want to go." But I thought gee, I thought, oh boy it's going to be a nice new one. But when I got out there it wasn't. And the fellow who had the interview, or hired me, told me later, "Why when I went out to see what used car they wanted to put you in," he said, "I know you'd be brought down, and I said I won't hold still for that." And he went to bat. And by the next week, why I got a new car. A new Chevy. Oh was that nice, seventh heaven. Could hardly wait to get back home to be with my wife because we hadn't had a car and to get something like that was really something. But then I went all over southern Michigan and northern Indiana and set up my, more or less, route. And what I was doing was selling instruments and also setting up rental programs. Which we would rent the instruments--there weren't that many music stores in some of the smaller towns. And then I'd have to go to get teachers, see. And so I usually went to some of the schools and colleges, most junior college, and then the regular ones too. But, you see, some of those who were studying music then, as a career, you know. If any of them wanted some time and all to give the time to get into that, why, I'd say, "Well here this school is," whatever, you know,

"and they want a teacher." It would be part time but they could come in and get that experience. I had good luck in getting quite a few of these characters these little schools, there might be a band--might be a band. A small one but then it was good. And so they used to call me Music Man. But I wasn't like the picture, like the show was, you know, that was run or that was formed. It was in a similar situation but they made of movie of it, you know, a play. But I have, as I say, such good memories. I remember when--I was just in a little town--and we had activities. Of course, as I mentioned earlier, I was in everything in the way of arts that I could get in. I wasn't big enough to do much in football other than sit on the bench. But, I could run and so sooner or later I got to play, play on the team and, as I say, I got to play some. But then we all wanted--there was quite a group of us--who wanted to get into music. And so, the town, as I say, again, it was a little town, they heard of a man that was teaching and was going around to different towns. And so they got ahold of him and he set up an arrangement all of us had to get an instrument. (Now this was before I was in the business when I was just a little kid.) And it got so, well, he had a big time. He come it once a week and he had the bookseller, and the teaching and all. It was quite an exciting thing because I say there wasn't much going on outside of school. And oh gosh. Then I remember the first time--we all had our horns--and we were taking lessons and all. Then we decided we were going to

play of course in the celebration that they call the wheat day. Because Kansas is noted for the wheat, anyway. So we had to have white britches and, which is no problem. The only thing they could get for us was...they got flour sacks...you know that the mill would put out. We got that. Then we got, I think, a picture at home of all of us on the church steps. Because it was a cheer thing, you know the churches. There was about, I don't know, twenty some of us. So we had the biggest time. And then time gets away from ya and then...they never got to the point to where they actually had a public school music. I mean this was, in fact it was in fact sponsored by the merchants, the merchants in the little town. So it was, oh I say I really enjoyed my youth from that time up. But then, as I say, after I got my job with Conn in band instruments. And just a little before that, why, I got married to a real nice girl. And I remember when we got a car that was really something. I've never forgotten that. I pulled up in front and walked and she just didn't know what to do what--to smile, or to cry, or what. But anyway we had some good years together. And then we had from then on...then things right along, see. I, well we, I took this job from Conn and then after the war--I couldn't get into the army or anything, I was in 4-F from an operation that I'd had. So after that, first of all since I was in 4-F, he said, well you've got to get into the service some way to help the war. So the company that I was working for, the music company, why they had closed in all of the products

that had been built. So I couldn't do anything there. So he said you'll have to be trained and you'll be in the factory. And I got started in that and I was built up until I was a foreman in a little department. Little department, however. It was quite a time. I got all involved in a lot of electronic things. And in some of the other types of thing too. But I managed about forty some people. And then I went into--this was when they were making the, I can't remember, the Norton Bomb Site. We did a certain part of that. And then I went from there, well, I was moved around to different departments because I was in the general department open. Then I was caught up or I was working all right among the general positions. And then time flies. And right after then, why then they wanted me to leave the factory and go into some administrative deals and then sales, back in the sales department. And so, I did. And then it got to where it wasn't what I thought it was going to be after this. And so I thought well, we'll just take a chance and go off and work. And I did. I went off and worked in some stores. And then before I knew I had an offer in California. So, I took to that. And I was out in San Diego, we were, for a couple of years. And then went back to Indiana because that job didn't work out the way I wanted it. So we went back to Indiana and I stayed there, or we did, for about six, seven years. And then all the time we had friends out here. It's kind of interesting but the friends we met in San Diego. The one of them that was a teacher that taught in Michigan and I called

on him when he was teaching music at the school. So he said oh you'd better get here, I'm going to stay. So we come out-I never took summer vacations, we would take winter. So we come out in the winter time, great fun. So one of my other friends that was out here checked around and found that there was big music company there that I could, should, he said, he'd like to have me write them. And then I did. And I flew out. And that then was just in a plain old airplane. And so we go out and interviewed and then we went back and decided to go. And so then we got everything together and come out. Went to work for them.

RW: And what was the name of that company?

JH: That company was Thera Music. Thera Music. It's not in business now but they were just up until about five years ago I guess, or so. But I had a good time. It was just an adverse situation that I didn't get what I was told I would. Well I got the management of a department but I just didn't. They put all of their confidence in other departments. And of course my biggest interest was band instruments. But I knew, I mean, all the others but I just.... So anyway we went back and I stayed with that company and I worked fine with them. I had with the one completely remodeling which we got so much for that we always got full. He had to--history-he had inherited his business and he had to be convinced that the music business was not the answer. I mean it was

the answer but he liked records. So he pinned his interest on records and I did all my other. And then he give me some free reign. So I got build up that part of it.. I built up quite a business, quite a store for him. But then after...after that, why, I lost my folks within a two year period.

RW: What year was this?

JH: Yes. And then we decided we were just going to come out here. Because we'd been come out, as I said earlier, in the winter. And just looked all around and thought well if we're going to ever change. Try it, try it now. So we sold our house and come out. We got out here in July.

RW: 1955?

JH: 1955. And I've got my first dollar up there. [Dollar bill on wall with the date November 4, 1955 beneath] But anyway, we come out in July and of course we had made the deal and the building wasn't completed. So that happens. And we landed on what's now Auburn Boulevard. Running down to my cousin's (who lived here then). And come out here to see. And he kept calling me just like a landlord. Oh you've gotta be out here. You've gotta be out here by May 1st or you won't.... Well we just can't wait, and so on and so forth. So that was all the more reason we hurried. I got

out here. We both come down here expecting to see at least the frames built a part up. (Which would have been on this side.) All that was in was the forms for the foundation. So we waited from then, between then and November before we ever got in. That was kind of in one way it was bad and in other ways it was good. It give us time to take care of a lot of things. Everything from advertising on. Get the equipment inside, you know, and all. But we missed. The first year we missed the telephone. They said we won't give you a...

[Tape 1, Side B]

RW: We were talking about how you first started your business in 1955. How big was your first store?

JH: 30 by 30. 900 square feet, yeah.

RW: What all did you have in there? You had instruments....

JH: I had a little bit of everything. I tried to build it. I had two pianos. And I had a dozen, let me see, I had about a half a dozen of all the instruments. I mean the basic instruments like saxophones and trumpets and clarinets and flutes. So I had about twenty, probably about. When I actually opened probably a dozen. And then in a matter of a

month or so I was able to get another dozen. I had about 25 then. But I only had two spinet pianos. And I didn't have those when I opened the door, but they come in the same month. You know, I had ordered them but they didn't get here in time. But then I had about a half a dozen of used instruments that I brought out with me, you know, that I purchased back there. And no sheet music in the beginning. I had I'd say from about five or six inexpensive type guitars and that was all. Right in June. We had 'em in the store. Then you see, and then four years later we built on the back here where all our sheet music is. But then I still didn't have that large of sheet music. I went into what was then stereo and television. And I didn't stay in that too long. I mean I turned around and enlarged my sheet music department, you know, which then occupied where the sheet music is now. But we grow into it, you know what I mean. Took us about, before we got it up to where we wanted it, about four years. Of sheet music. Because now we have one of the largest, if not the largest, in the northern part of the state. We go clear up to Redding and up through there and as far as Reno and we don't go toward San Francisco. We go--Vacaville is about, about in there that's as far as we go that way, west. And south we go down to just about Stockton. That's not for everything but that's basically for in our music, our sheet music as we call it. And it's a very lucrative, very important thing now, and as I say, in size. But we opened the store with one browser with four partitions. And then we

had just a few basic instrument books for trumpet or saxophone. And pianos, we had several different courses of that. And then we had music books for the school. We did there, again, in the first year we did so little. But we just kept growing and growing. And got us now to where we are.

RW: How big is the store now?

JH: It's about 7500 square feet. Now, let's see. Yes, 7500 square feet.

RW: And you have a music studio here. How long have you had the music studio?

JH: I had those ever since we built the building which would have been in the late Sixties. We had these nice studios. In the very beginning we built them in like most do. But they just didn't work out. They were too noisy, you know, in the way they were built. That's when we had the studios were over here where the office is now, see. And this was--now let's see--we put this in after we went into our major remodeling. But then we had a lot of display room. And we had everything from hanging to the ceiling to the floor. When you got going.

RW: Now you mentioned you're involved with the schools, music with the schools?

JH: Yes, we service all the schools we can or have the opportunity to. And we conduct a rental program. It means whereby you can rent the instrument and on a month-to-month basis or a two or three month basis. At the end of that time you get so you can determine the adaptability. And then at that time they can choose to purchase the instrument or they can continue to rent it or they can return it. But you get of the adaptability and interest and all within usually about a--the plateau so to speak--at around three months, two months. Two to three months, you know. Under what, you have to allow too, that's from the very beginning. It's usually best to go on a three month basis. Three or four month basis. We rent for up to six months. And then with option to apply the rent on the purchase. It's a good plan. That way a parent doesn't. If a parent shows aptitude and the time comes up, why, then they can make the decision to buy it. And the rent applies on the purchase. Or they can return it. Or they can continue to rent but only the six months would be applicable. So we extended the rental because we thought it would make more people want to stay in. Because they just don't feel that they know enough unless their parents really look into it, you know. Why the aptitude. Why they get, technically, they're all ready within three months. You know that they're gonna go ahead. Because, as I say, ours is

intended on a--and is--on a rental with an aptitude, the exposure. Or it's just answering a lot of questions about. Because they may say in thirty days, well I don't care for this, you know. Or whatever it might be. But yet, it works out. It's so good a plan, and I've worked it for so many years that I firmly believe that it's done in a fair approach. Because some that say well, we'll rent you for ninety days and then you can buy it. Or they can say you can buy it in the beginning. But what you don't tell you is number one, is they take to get you to purchase it without the idea of wanting to keep it, see. But then it comes along and the kid isn't doing well. And so the parents want to return it, you see. But they bought it. We don't ever do that. I never did do that. But I do believe in the opportunity for a youngster to get into an instrument and prove aptitude and ability. And we just, we do a lot of rental. In numbers, you know. And that's about the only thing I can say in that behalf. But we rent privately ninety percent of the types of instruments there are. From a drum to a piccolo to, you know, everything. It's an interesting business that way. Interesting too when the kids in school, they get all involved in their instrument. And then a little way down the road, then they want to, besides playing in the school band, Then they want to get in the dance band or the orchestra band. And that is another thing that has grown so in demand. While they still have their major bands, you

know, marching and otherwise. But then you turn around and they have the big jazz bands and that's quite the thing now.

RW: What would you say you are most proud of in your business?

JH: Well, what I'm most proud of is the thing that I can start so small and accomplish so much. I don't do it in a braggart way. But I mean, I really mean that. Because I really worked and I really believed that it could be done. But there were many that, outside of my wife bless her heart, that did say, "Oh, you're never going to make it, you're never going to make it." And you can imagine what that does to your thinking and your feeling, and belief. But when we got under the first year, why then we just started in. And so many come to us then to want sell us, you know, and all. So we had a chance to get makes, some manufactures, that in the very beginning they'd say, "Well come back and see us next year, Jack." Stuff like that. Which don't do anything for your morale. But that, I think, singled out without getting into specific items like: the band instruments separate from the sheet music and the supplies and the Arlo methods, you know, tied up. But I think it's.... But I was also proud of the fact that I had the... [Jack is paged: "Jack? Line 2 please." Could you take the number please?]... Now they busted in there, I'm trying to think. That I could do what I did. Because I had confidence because

I'd worked with enough. And like you would naturally do, you compare to this one and that one with what you've done and what you could do and what the problems were. It's true that we did sail right along. From the first week. And it was a thrill but you're running scared. I mean you do. It's natural. But just soon as we got known why it just seemed to happen. Yet it's hard to start out and not be able to go big, you know, to have the capital. Which I didn't. But as you grow and all you build up a rapport with more people, customers. And you do a lot of things about that. And the other thing that I liked about it was, as I say, it just seemed to form in. The only thing that a fellow taught me, that I worked with when I was in the manufacturing division in the company. He said, he didn't say it in a way to--false pride--you know, to give me any false handshake or anything. But he said, "Jack," he said, "you'll be capable of doing more business than you can afford to do in your formative years." And I've never forgot that. And I saw him for quite a few years and he said, "Well that's the way. You follow that." And I saw it come to pass. I mean you just had to say, "Well, I can do so much this year. I want to do more but I've got to be able to turn and get the so-called turns, you know. And then I can do a little more." But to go out and say give me fifty of this or something like that. And they if they didn't go or sell repeatedly, why you're in trouble. But it was a good philosophy. And as I say, I believed in it and I applied it and I used it. But then, oh

it just seemed like for the most part it went together. You see this was a whole chain of little stores, you know. And I had the nerve to say to the landlord. I said I would like to get a--oh what do they call it? I can't think this morning. Well in other words, a possibility of getting the other spaces as you went buy. It was just on a special. You didn't have to pay for it. But you had to be ready to move when somebody was going out. And just with us you just took one building at a time as they'd go out. Just like we planned it that way, you know. And until we took the whole thing. And then we built on, the landlord built on another wing there. And then we had all the buildings were just this size. They are out there, not in there. But anyway, then the next thing, why we went into a new lease as leases had come along, see. Had two then. And then they built the back. They built 50, I think 50 by 25. And all that. And then we learned that that was as far as we could go because you have to have so many feet of automobile parking to every foot that you have of the building to have the store. That was something new, too. But anyway that in construction wise and all, we got it all together. And here we are now.

RW: Here you are. You mentioned that your wife had helped me build up your business. Tell me how you met your wife.

JH: I met my wife. Well, we were in South Bend, Indiana and she was working in an exclusive ladies ready-to-wear place.

And when I went back there, my aunt and uncle, as I mentioned earlier. I lived with them, had board and room with them. And then I used to, my aunt was up in years and I was just selling shoes and getting started. So we had a period of time where I would always go over and meet her at the streetcar or the bus place. Daytime, you know, wherever. In the winter time back there, boy winters are something else. But anyway I'd go in and pick up. My aunt, Eileen was her name, Eileen Gibson. And so to make a long story short. One day she said I want you to meet somebody who just went to work here. And I said well that's fine, I'd be glad. Because I was a real loner. And so she did. Well first of, my wife was a favorite of hers even when we didn't know each other. And I started going with her. And it just went on for, I don't know, golly about a year and a half or so or something. But the people in the store they thought that I was a real hero because I looked after my aunt. That was great. And of course she, when she said, I never will forget. She said, "Jack I want you to meet the nicest girl." Well Aunt Eileen I'd be glad to do that. But I'd be playing usually with the band on weekends, so. Anyway it was nice. We were married June the 2nd, 1940. She passed away in 1976. And we'd been anywhere from South Bend to California. To back and lived in southern Indiana then down here in the course of. Well let's see, we were out here in a matter of.... Let's see. Well first we come out on holiday, you know, and things like that. But we got out here in July of

'55. But nothing was ready. I told you about that. We had quite a time. It was good and it was bad. The good part was that we had the time even though they didn't even have the building built. We'd go out and shop for other things, you know. Even down to going down to Los Angeles and getting with some of the distributors. That's when there wasn't much up this way except one big one over in San Francisco. But anyway, got that and then we got the next thing was we got started. I mean we opened in a kind of worrisome time. We opened in November. And it was because, you know, was so close to Christmas and we didn't have any advertising or anything, see. So we just, I never will forget it, I put in an ad in the paper about the store, you know. And I got right in the right-hand column. I got two columns high and then just come right down the paper to almost to the bottom. Listing things that we had and Christmas-y and all that. And a lot of people come and they said that "Oh I didn't know that you were here. And I such and such and do you have those?" Yes, we have those ma'am. And go from there. And then when radio come along, why we used to run ads in there. In that. That was the radio itself. I mean they had a station right over here on--what's the one?--anyway it was right just a mile from here. It was right in the Town and County Shop. Town and Country building. So anyway. From there we just worked out with different things. But we had Country Club Center had just opened the previous year from when we got into it. [Chuckles] But, new experience, you

know. And the good thing was, as I think I mentioned, we had consistent growth. And that helps. Even though you have to watch yourself and it too. Because you can get your own self in problems. But I just like it. I like the business. I like to do in it and do what I best can. And that's about it.

RW: One more thing. How has the business, doing business in Sacramento changed over the years?

JH: Oh well, number one, of course there were several stores downtown. And in the course of the years, and I can't tell you how fast or anything, they were dropping out, you know, one way or another. And then some of the big ones did in the later years in the like eighties or late seventies. And then we went along for several years and we become one of the biggest ones then. And then a few years later then in come with the rock and roll and with the guitar business, you know. Why course we got into that too, but it was big. And there were several in it. But there again they come and go. Stayed a couple years or three, four years. Then the next thing you know they were gone. But we found one time there were seven stores in town. Now there must be, oh, a good dozen and a half. All not centered like we are, but some of them are records. Some of them are single guitars or whatever it might be. They're in the product, the different products. But they're not what you call full line like I

mentioned, I think before. But it's a highly competitive. I like the company. I like the way that it's handled and built. In that you've got, like we have, a little bit of everything. Enjoy it but. Most of the companies--now we have some that are in strictly now the electronics are so big. We have electronics but we're not the biggest in that. But most of them that are in that are not anywhere near what we are in the other, in the other products.

RW: Well, I wanted to say thank you for doing this interview. And I just want to find out, how you got the name Jack?

JH: Oh that. My mother used to tell me, anyway, that when I was born, why my dad wanted me to be Ezra Norton. And my mother said I don't think that--course the Norton name was in the family but my dad wanted to put that Ezra on first. And anyway, things went along. And my uncle, who was a banker, and he didn't like the name. And so he said, sister I'm going to rename him. I'm going to call him Jack." And it happened to be that I just, my first year, when he wanted to name me. Why he named me what was Dollar, Dollar Day. Business, I mean a store, you know, food in a little town. So she tells me, anyway. And she said he just announced that my name was going to be Jack. Everybody thought well all right. And so from then on in everything most that I do or did, outside of the legality items, you know. Why because I

use Jack and went to at school, you know. And you just hung on. But I finally legalized it as you can do and have to do. Because and I'd say known as Norton Hyde, known as Jack. I get so they ask me that several times and they tell them well I changed it over. And they say well what is your name. I use the name E. Norton Hyde. Oh. Now what's the E? Then I say just in parentheses put down there "Jack." And forget it.

RW: Well Mr. Jack Hyde of Jack's House of Music, thank you very much!

JH: Sure now. Well, glad I could.